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statistical information becomes more extensive it will be compelled to raise itself to a high standard of excellence by rigid, impartial, and scientific criticism.

THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF STREET RAILWAYS.

BY CHARLES H. COOLEY OF THE UNITED STATES CENSUS.

Rapid transit has hitherto been discussed by economists chiefly in connection with other questions, and therefore in a somewhat desultory and one-sided manner. There is need that street railway transportation should be studied apart from those questions with which it is usually connected; and that an attempt should be made to gain a more adequate and scientific conception of its social function.

This subject will be considered under three heads. First, it will be attempted to formulate a more comprehensive conception of the function of city transportation; secondly, the increasing need of the efficient performance of this function will be shown; thirdly, various factors upon which efficiency depends will be discussed.

We must recognize in the system of urban transportation a definite social organ, having for its function the distribution of population about industrial centres. It is an industrial necessity that men shall work in dense aggregates. Humanity requires that they shall not live in dense aggregates. The conditions of industrial life are such that the number of aggregated workers necessarily increases relatively to the number of scattered workers. There is then,

a conflict between the industrial tendency to aggregation, and the needs of humanity. The function of city railways is to reconcile these conflicting requirements of the social organism.

When the social function of rapid transit is clearly conceived, the importance of the efficient performance of that function readily appears. The nearer a condition of ideal efficiency is approached, the more possible is it to secure to the poorest classes the conditions of healthful and moral living, by increasing the extent to which a given industrial population may be spread out. On account of the rapidly increasing aggregation of population, the need for efficient rapid transit must constantly increase.

Two of the factors which enter into the efficiency of city transportation may profitably be considered without the necessity of entering into technical discussions. These factors are the speed of the cars, and the cost of riding. It may be shown that the distance from their work at which it is possible for those to live who ride to and fro on the cars varies directly with the speed of the cars; but that the total area which rapid transit makes available for population varies as the square of the speed of the cars.

The cost of riding is a very important factor of efficiency, because every decrease in fares brings suburban residence within reach of large classes of the poorest people. A phenomenon which, though incidental to the spreading of population, is yet of first importance, is the influence of rapid transit on city rents. In some cases an actual decrease of rent in thickly settled quarters has been observed to follow the opening of a new suburban railway.

Rapid transit must not be regarded too exclusively as a source of municipal revenue. The function of spreading population is of coördinate importance with any of those now performed by the administrative agencies of cities. Should street railways ever be owned or directly controlled by the public, cheapness and efficiency of service should be considered as of more moment than the obtaining of municipal revenue.

STATISTICS AS A MEANS OF CORRECTING CORPORATE
ABUSES.

BY PROF. HENRY C. ADAMS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

Federal and State governments are accustomed to require from corporations comprehensive reports. Originally the purpose in requiring these reports was to correct some definite corporate abuse, and it is quite likely that at the present time many of those who defend the right of the government to make demands of this sort on corporations would urge that this was the only end held in view. One cannot, however, consider this policy without being led to inquire respecting its possible development in the future. There is much to be said in favor of bringing all corporations under the control of government so far as reports are concerned, and of subjecting all businesses, which from their nature should be incorporated, to the inspection of government officials. The tendency towards the increasing publicity of corporate management is a healthful tendency, and one that should meet the approval of all who fear the